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ACTION AF-01

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FM AMEMBASSY KAMPALA
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KAMPALA 004883

AF AND AF/C ONLY FROM AMBASSADOR RAWSON

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PREL, PGOV, RW, UG
SUBJECT: IMPRESSIONS ON THE CENTRAL AFRICAN CRISIS

1. CONFIDENTIAL - ENTIRE TEXT.

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2. WHEN WE GOT ON THE PLANE LAST MONDAY, WE CARRIED
WITH US A DAUNTING CHALLENGE: TO SECURE REGIONAL
SUPPORT FOR A CEASE-FIRE IN RWANDA, TO BOLSTER BURUNDI
EFFORTS TO DEAL WITH PRESIDENTIAL SUCCESSION, TO
ENHANCE INTERNATIONAL PREPAREDNESS FOR THE
HUMANITARIAN CRISIS WHICH RWANDA GENERATES AND TO OPEN
THE DOOR TO LOGISTIC SUPPORT FOR UNAMIR FROM REGIONAL
POSTS. GIVEN THE ENVIRONMENT -- CONTINUED FIGHTING IN
RWANDA, SKIRMISHES OVER THE WEEKEND IN BURUNDI -- WE

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MIGHT WELL HAVE BEEN VOICES CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS.

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REGIONAL DEPLOYMENT FOR UNAMIR

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3. NONETHELESS, WE WERE HEARD AND MOVED THE US
POSITION FORWARD ON ALL FRONTS. FIRST, UNAMIR
DEPLOYMENT. WHILE BURUNDI'S PRIME MINISTER WAS, AS
USUAL, RELUCTANT TO HAVE UNAMIR DEPLOY ACROSS BURUNDI
TERRITORY BECAUSE OF LOCAL POLITICAL SENSITIVITIES, HE

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DID LEAVE THAT POSSIBILITY OPEN FOR "URGENT" CASES. THE MILITARY WERE MORE FORTHCOMING: GENDARMERIE AND ARMY CHIEFS OF STAFF AND THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE SAID BURUNDI WOULD ACCEPT TRANSIT OF UNAMIR EQUIPMENT IF BOTH BELLIGERENTS AGREED TO THE OPERATION. THE LOGISTICS DOOR IN UGANDA WAS WIDE OPEN. ALTHOUGH UNAMIR HAD, BY GENERAL DALLAIRE'S OWN ADMISSION, RUFFLED FEATHERS WITH ITS HASTY SWITCH TO ENTEBBE AS A LOGISTIC POINT, BY THE TIME WE GOT TO KAMPALA, SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT, INCLUDING THE FIRST APC'S FROM SOMALIA, WERE MOVING SMOOTHLY THROUGH THE AIRPORT.

BUTRESSING BURUNDI

4. THINGS WERE SKITTISH IN BURUNDI. UN REP ABDALLAH INFORMED US THAT POLITICAL/ETHNIC LINES HAD HARDENED: THE OPPOSITION WERE SETTING IMPOSSIBLE PRECONDITIONS FOR NEGOTIATIONS ON PRESIDENTIAL SUCCESSION, WHILE FRODEBU WERE DEMANDING JULY 1, INDEPENDENCE DAY, AS

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"DATE FIRM" FOR INSTALLING A NEW PRESIDENT. HARDLINE TUTSI "MAFIA" WERE THREATENING ANYONE WHO DID NOT LINE UP WITH THEIR POSITION. INDEED, GIVEN THE PRESIDENT'S ABSENCE, THE SKIRMISHES WHICH ERUPTED OVER THE WEEKEND AND THE FACE-OFF ON PRESIDENTIAL SUCCESSION, ABDALLAH WELCOMED OUR PRESENCE AS ASSURANCE THAT THERE WOULD NOT BE A COUP WHILE WE WERE IN TOWN. I PUSHED COMPROMISE AND OPENNESS WITH THE PRESIDENT, PRIME MINISTER, AND MILITARY LEADERS. I ALSO HAD A LONG TALK WITH A TUTSI CONCILIATOR, FORMER ADB VICE-PRESIDENT BIHUTE AND A SHORT ONE WITH A HARDLINER, THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE. AN INFORMAL WELCOMING OF BEANS ARRIVING ON DOD TRANSPORT GAVE ME THE CHANCE TO GO ON RADIO IN KIRUNDI AND TELL BARUNDI WE EXPECTED THEM TO LIVE TOGETHER, WORK TOGETHER AND BUILD THEIR COUNTRY TOGETHER.

HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

5. A HOST OF ISSUES ON THE HUMANITARIAN AGENDA HAVE BEEN RAISED IN A SEPARATE AGENDA. IT WAS A BONUS TO SEE THE DHA REGIONAL COORDINATOR AND GENERAL DALLAIRE IN NAIROBI. MY IMPRESSION IS THAT COORDINATION OF

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HUMANITARIAN AID IS GOOD LOCALLY IN KIGALI AND REGIONALLY IN NAIROBI, BUT FALLS APART IN BUJUMBURA BECAUSE OF TRADITIONAL UN BUREAUCRATIC TURF FIGHTS AND IN KABALE BECAUSE THERE ARE SO MANY AGENCIES AND PVO'S STRUGGLING TO DO GOOD. HAVING A DHA COORDINATOR AND OUR OWN DART REP IN KABALE WILL HELP SPEED RELIEF TO RPF ZONES. MYRON GOLDEN, USAID DIRECTOR IN BUJUMBURA

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FELT THAT OUR SEPARATE MEETINGS WITH UN AGENCIES AND PVO'S GAVE FOCUS AND IMPETUS TO THEIR EFFORTS IN COPING WITH THE CHALLENGES OF SOUTHERN RWANDA. MEANWHILE SOME BRAVE PEOPLE FROM THE UN AND PVO'S ARE GOING TO EXTRAORDINARY LENGTHS TO FIND THE WANDERING POPULATIONS IN RWANDA'S SOUTHWEST AND DETERMINE THEIR NEEDS.

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SECURING A CEASE-FIRE

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6. FOR A FEW HOURS, IT SEEMED AS IF TUNIS WOULD TAKE CARE OF THIS

PROBLEM WITHOUT OUR INTERVENTION. I, NONETHELESS, URGED ALL BURUNDI INTERLOCUTORS TO USE WHATEVER MEANS THEY HAD TO CONTACT FRIENDS ON EITHER SIDE OF THE STRIFE AND URGE A CEASE-FIRE. ALL BURUNDI OFFICIALS AGREED THAT A CEASE-FIRE WAS IMMEDIATELY REQUIRED. UGANDANS ARE USING THE SAME LANGUAGE AS WE:

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THE WAR CANNOT BE WON, RWANDANS MUST LEARN TO LIVE TOGETHER, THEREFORE A CEASE FIRE AND NEGOTIATIONS ON POWER SHARING ARE ESSENTIAL. YET, DESPITE WHATEVER WE, BURUNDI, UGANDA AND ALL AFRICA SAY, THE FIGHTING CONTINUES BECAUSE THE RPF PURSUES THE WAR AND THE RGF PERMITS THE MASSACRES.

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7. CAN A RAPID MULTILATERAL INTERVENTION STOP THIS KILLING? IT WILL CERTAINLY COMPLICATE THE SITUATION ON THE GROUND FOR HUMANITARIAN AGENCIES WHO ARE ALREADY FINDING TEAMS WITH FRENCH ON BOARD BLOCKED FROM ENTERING RPF TERRITORY. IT WILL ALSO DEEPLY
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UPSET THE TUTSI IN BURUNDI WHO SEE IT AS THE WRONG PEOPLE COMING IN AFTER THEIR COUSINS HAVE ALREADY BEEN KILLED. THE RPF POSITION HAS BEEN ANNOUNCED; PASTEUR BIZIMUNGU TOLD US THEY COULD WELCOME A MISSION THAT KEPT TO TERMS OF REFERENCE OUTLINED IN OUR TALKING POINTS (PARA 6, STATE 163237). CAN THOSE TERMS OF REFERENCE BE KEPT? CAN A MULTILATERAL FORCE, ESPECIALLY A FRENCH ONE, STAY OUT OF THE RPF/RGF WAR OR FAIL TO SUPPORT THE GOVERNMENT? I AM SURE YOU HAVE WORKED THESE QUESTIONS OVER AND DECIDED IT WAS WORTH THE THROW. WHETHER THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THIS DELEGATION HOLD UP IN AN INTERVENTION SCENARIO WILL DEPEND ON HOW THE DICE LAND.
8. AMBASSADOR RAWSON DRAFTED THIS CABLE PRIOR TO HIS DEPARTURE. SHIPPY

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